IN-LINE SKATE GUARD

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is entitled to the benefit of United States Provisional Patent Application # 60/426,357 filed in the United States Patent Office on November 15, 2002.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

This invention relates to the field of ski or skate appliance or attachments, more particularly, scabbards for ice and roller skates and specifically for an improved in-line skate guard.

Discussion of the Prior Art

In line skating is a popular past-time and, unlike ice skating, in line skating is not restricted to an arena. In line skating can take place on any relatively flat and smooth surface such as a road or side walk and very large distances can be covered by an in-line skater. After completing a skating session or upon arriving at a destination, an in line skater may wish to enter a store, climb stairs or use public transportation while still wearing the in line skates rather than remove them and dawning walking shoes. This need to walk and/or climb stairs rather than skate in certain locations creates a problem for the in line skater because there is generally no way to fix the rollers in a stationary configuration so that they do not rotate when the skater attempts to walk. Further, even if fixed, the rollers do not provide a stable surface upon which to bear the weight of the wearer or upon which to walk in a safe fashion. Attempting to walk while wearing a pair of in line skates with free-wheeling rollers presents well known hazards in restricted or crowed spaces such a retail outlets or on public transportation conveyances. Indeed, many stores and public transportation organizations have banned the wearing of in line skates on their premises. Various solutions to this problem have been attempted to provide a stable platform for the wearer of in line skates so that they may walk in areas where skating is awkward or prohibited. The prior art is exemplified by United States Patent #5,573,275 entitled "In-Line Skate Guard" issued to Smith and Hardie on November 12, 1996 shown in the figure labeled as "Prior Art". Smith and Hardie disclose a guard for use on in-line skates comprising a rigid main body with wheel receiving troughs that are slightly wider than the wheels they receive. While this guard is adequate to permit the wearer to ambulate over a short distances, the wearer's leg movements must be piston-like so that the base of the guard is maintained horizontal. This

creates a significant amount of stress on the leg and in particular on the patella ligaments supporting the knee cap. Furthermore, a design such as disclosed in Smith and Hardie is not well adapted to climbing or descending stairs or inclined surfaces. For example, an impact upon the heel of the Smith and Hardie guard may result in rotation of the rollers, dislodgement of the skate guard and injury to the wearer. Therefore, the prior art discloses only a partial solution to the problem of walking while wearing in line roller skates in that it is not adapted to the human walking gait cycle. Hence, there continues to be a need for an in line skate guard that permits a natural walking gait cycle so that the wearer of a pair of in line skates can walk comfortably and safely.

OBJECTS OF THE INVENTION

In light of the disadvantages noted above, it is a principle object of the present invention to provide an improved skate guard that permits the wearer to adopt a natural walking gait cycle to allow greater access and maneuverability.

Another object of the invention is to provide for an in line skate guard that prevents roller movement when the wearer is walking.

Another object of the invention is to provide an in line skate guard that permits the wearer to walk naturally over relatively long distances.

Another objective of the invention is to provide an in line skate guard that permits the wearer to climb and descent inclined surfaces and in particular stairs.

Another object of the invention is to provide for an in line skate guard that is easy to use, fix to the in line skate and transport while the in line skater is skating.

A further objective of the invention is to provide for an in line skate guard that is inexpensive to manufacture.

Still further objects and advantages to our invention will become apparent from a consideration of the ensuing description and drawings.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Our invention is an in line skate guard for an in line skate. A typical in line skate comprises a boot and a frame. The frame carries a plurality of serially mounted rollers. Typically, each of the rollers has a width between their side walls and a circumferential arcuate taper at their outside ends. A typical in line skate will also include a brake spur on one of the skates, usually the right one.

Our invention has an elongate body with a front portion having a first width and opposite and parallel first and second lugs projecting upwards. Our invention also includes a rear portion that has a width that is wider than the width of the front portion to accommodate the brake spur. The rear portion also includes opposite and parallel third and fourth lugs projecting upwards. Our invention also includes a middle portion. The middle portion has width equal to the width, of the front portion. The middle portion also has a groove. Within the groove there is a first width and a second width.

Our invention has a bottom surface adapted for purchase on a walking or contact surface. The bottom surface comprises a first contact plane having an angle of approximately 45 degrees to the contact surface; a second contact plane having a slightly elevated angle above the contact surface; a third horizontal contact plane; a fourth contact plane having a slightly elevated angle above the contact surface; and, a fifth contact plane having an angle of approximately 45 degrees to the contact surface. The bottom surface of the body may have a textured pattern or tread to improve purchase and traction on the walking surface.

The first and second opposite and parallel lugs define a gap. Similarly, on the back portion, the third and fourth lugs define another gap adapted to receive the brake spur. The contours of the front and rear lugs act as guides to permit the wearer to jamb the skate guards onto the stake from any angle without having to resort to a toe-first insertion.

The groove in the upper surface of the elongate body of our invention is further defined by a first wall having a top surface, an inside surface and an outside surface, and a second wall having a top surface, an inside surface and an outside surface. The first wall and the second wall are adapted to flex outwards when the rollers are inserted between them. Consequently, the rollers are held in a pinching relationship within the groove.

The groove in the elongate body of our invention further includes a bottom surface adapted to engage the contact surface of each of the rollers. The groove has a first width that is adapted to receive the width of the rollers and hold them in a pinching relationship. The groove has a second width that is narrower than the first width. Between the first and second widths there is a beveled portion adapted to receive and hold in a pinching relationship the circumferential arcuate taper of each of the rollers. The groove further includes a front curvilinear bight and a rear curvilinear bight. The groove is deep enough so that when the in line skate guard is fastened to the in line skate, the top surface of the walls of the groove abut the bottom surface of the frame.

Within each of the lugs there is an aperture having a countersunk portion on their inside walls. Each of the apertures contains a sleeve.

Between the opposite and parallel lugs there are mounted semi-circular pivot hoops used to mount the elongate body to the skate. Tension chords are also used to fasten the elongate body of the in line skate guard to the in line skate. Each tension chord has an eye ring fixed to one end and a clip fixed to its opposite end. The eye ring of each tension chord is engaged in a sliding relationship with the hoops.

Our invention permits the wearer of an in line skate to walk normally using a natural human walking gait cycle. The natural human walking gait cycle comprises a heel strike phase, a transition phase from the heel strike phase to a foot flat phase, a foot flat phase, a transition phase between the foot flat phase and the heel off phase, a heel off phase and a toe off phase. Therefore, the in line skate guard of our invention comprises an elongate body having a bottom surface comprising a first contact plane adapted to contact the walking surface during the heel strike phase; a second contact plane adapted to contact the walking surface during said transition phase between the foot flat phase and the heel off phase; a third contact plane adapted to contact the walking surface during the foot flat phase; a fourth contact plane adapted to contact the walking surface during the transition phase between the foot flat phase and the toe off phase; and, a fifth contact surface adapted to contact the walking surface during the toe off phase. The first and fifth contact planes are raised approximately 45 degrees from the horizontal. The second and fourth contact planes are slightly elevated above the horizontal.

Our invention is also made from a family mold process comprising the following steps: making a first mold adapted to the shape of the front portion wherein the shape of the front

portion is fixed; making a second mold adapted to the shape of the rear portion wherein the shape of the rear front portion is fixed; making a third mold adapted to the shape of the middle portion wherein the shape of the middle portion is variable to accommodate the variable lengths of serially mounted rollers; joining the first, second and third molds to make a complete mold of the elongate body; and, injecting suitable mold material into the mold.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The foregoing and other objects, features and advantages of the invention will be apparent from the following more particular description of the preferred embodiments of the invention as illustrated in the accompanying drawings in which like reference characters refer to the same parts throughout the different views. The drawings are not necessary to scale, emphasis instead being placed upon illustrating the principles of the invention.

PRIOR ART: This is a view of a prior art in line skate.

Figure 1 is a side view of a typical in line skate.

Figure 2 is a front (toe) and rear (heel) view of the same in line skate of Figure 1.

Figure 3 is a side view of a typical in line skate with our invention fixed thereto.

Figure 4 is a front view and a side view of the front portion of our invention.

Figure 5 is a side view and a rear view of the rear portion of our invention.

Figure 6 is a side view and a cross-sectional view of the middle portion of our invention.

Figure 7 is a side view of the elongate body of our invention.

Figure 7A is a side view of the front portion of our invention showing the angular relationship between the toe, the first roller wheel axle and the contact surface.

Figure 7B is a side view of the rear portion of our invention showing the angular relationship between the heel, the last roller axle and the contact surface.

Figure 8 is a top view of the elongate body of our invention.

Figure 9 is a sectional view of the front face of the front portion of our invention showing the first roller of an in line skate installed therein.

Figure 10 is a sectional view of the rear face of the rear portion of our invention showing the last roller of an in line skate installed therein.

Figure 11 is a sectional view of the front portion of our invention showing first fixing means.

Figure 12 is a cross sectional view of the front portion of our invention illustrating the installation of sleeves into the apertures on each of the four lugs of our invention.

Figure 13 is a top view of our invention showing the relationship between the elongate body and the fixing means.

Figure 14 is a sectional view of the rear portion of our invention illustrating second fixing means.

Figure 15 is an expanded assembly drawing of one of the tension chords used in our invention.

Figure 16 is a detailed view of the first pivot hoop of our invention.

Figure 17 is a sectional view of the front portion of our invention showing detail on how the first semi circular pivot hoop is fixed to the first portion.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Introduction

The Human Walking Gait

Prior to describing our invention in detail, it is important to have some understanding of the anatomy of the foot and the nature of the walking process. The foot has two vital functions. The first function is to support the weight of the body while a person is standing or walking. The second function is to act as a lever to propel the body forward. The ankle joint allows the vertical excursion of the foot necessary for walking. Strong ligaments on each side of the ankle joint provide support and limit movement as needed.

The human walking gait cycle has the following characteristics:

- The centre of mass of the body moves in a vertical plane during the gait cycle;
- Horizontal body displacements occur with each rotatory movement of the pelvis as a leg advances;
- Lateral body displacements occur as the body is shifted slightly over the weight bearing limb with each step; and,
- The total lateral displacement of the body is approximately five centimeters from side to side with each gait cycle.

The human walking gait cycle is divided into two repeating phases. The first phase is the stance phase. The stance phase comprises about 62% of the gait cycle and is the phase

during which the weight of the body is supported by both limbs. The second phase is the swing phase during which the body advances and comprises about 38% of the gait cycle.

The weight bearing or stance phase comprises a series of steps or phases:

- The initial heel strike phase, then proceeding to;
    - A transition phase between the heel strike phase and the flat foot phase;
- The flat foot phase, then proceeding to;
    - A transition phase between the flat foot phase and the heel off phase;
- The heel off phase, the proceeding to;
- The toe off phase.

These phases are repetitive and never changing.

Our Invention

Our invention is an in line skate guard that has been designed with the biomechanical attributes of the human walking gait cycle in mind. As will be fully explained below, our invention incorporates novel and inventive features that permit the in line skater to walk with a normal gait, climb or descend inclined surfaces, mount and descend stairs and even run over short distances safely and without stressing the anatomy of the ankle or knee.

The Prior Art

Referring to the figure labeled "Prior Art", there is shown an in line skate guard. This prior art skate guard does not permit the wearing to walk with a natural walking gait. In particular, this device is not adapted to bear the forces from the heel strike phase of walking. For that reason, the wearer of the prior art device must ambulate by lifting legs up and down in a piston type movement rather than the natural two phase stride described above. This creates strain on the anatomy of the wearer. Furthermore, attempting to walk in a natural manner while wearing this device could result in the heel strike dislodging the guard body from the roller wheels and potentially causing an accident. Further the trough does not support the skate boot in a sufficient manner that would permit the wearer to walk or climb and descend stairs without potentially dislodging the rollers from the guard.

As fully described below, our invention provides novel and inventive improvements over the prior art that permit the wearer of our in line skate guard to walk naturally.

A Typical In Line Skate Structure

Referring to Figure 1, there is shown a typical in line skate structure (10). The in line skate comprises a boot (12) mounted to which is a frame (14). The frame (14) is adapted to accept and hold in a rotational relationship a plurality of rollers (16 to 22). Each of the rollers (16 to 22) is mounted to the frame (14) by axles (24 to 30). The boot (12) has a toe portion (32) and a heel portion (34). Extending from heel portion (34) is a spur (36) to which is mounted a rubber projection (38) adapted to act as brake when frictionally engaged with the surface

(39) upon which the skater is skating. There is usually only one brake spur on a pair of skates and this is usually on the right skate.

Referring to Figure 2, there is shown a front or toe view and a rear or heel view of the in line skate (10). First roller (16) is mounted to frame (14) by way of axle (24). First roller (16) has a circumferential arcuate taper (38) for contacting skating surface (39). Similarly, last roller (22) is mounted to frame (14) by axle (30). Roller (22) has a circumferential arcuate taper (41) for contact with the skating surface (41).

Detailed Description of the Physical Structure of Our Invention

General Description

Referring now to Figure 3, there is shown our invention installed on an in line skate. The embodiment shown is for wearing on the skate with the skate brake, the right skate. A person skilled in the art will realize that our invention is sold in pairs and that the skate guard is adopted to be worn on either skate.

Our invention (40) is an in line skate guard for an in line skate (10) comprising a boot (12) and a frame (14) mounting rollers (16 to 22). Our invention comprises an elongate body (42) having a front portion (44) (illustrated in Figure 4), a mid portion (46) (illustrated in Figure 6) and a rear portion (48) (illustrated in Figure 5). Each of these portions may be made into a separate mold and then assembled into a single mold. This is termed a family mold. Using the family mold manufacturing method, the front portion (44) and the rear portion (48) are

consistent for all variants of our in line skate guard manufactured. However, the mid portion (46) is by necessity variable to accommodate differing lengths of boot as well as more or fewer rollers. Therefore, our invention has the advantage of being able to accommodate these variations by joining the non-varying front portion and rear portion molds with a variable mid portion mold. It is further to be understood that there are no joint lines between the front portion, mid portion and rear portion of our invention even though they might be suggested in the drawings. All three portions are integral to each other as would be expected in an injection molding process. Our invention is a single piece in line skate guard made from a suitable non-marking, non-slip and resilient compound having an elastic ability to absorb shock caused by walking. Such a compound must also be suitable for hot injection molding.

The Front Portion

Referring now to Figure 4, there is in a front sectional view and a side view the front portion (44) of the in line skate guard of our invention. Line (50) services to delineate the front portion (44) from the mid portion (46). It is to be understood that the line (50) demarcation may vary in location depending on the mold manufacturer but will generally be found in the location shown.

Still referring to Figure 4, there is shown a front sectional view of front portion (44). The front portion (44) has opposite and parallel first (52) and second (54) lugs projecting upwards. The lugs are used to mount means to fix our invention to the in line skate as more fully explained below. The first (52) and second (54) lugs having inside surfaces (56) and

(58) respectively and outside surfaces (60) and (62) respectively. The lugs have curved front surfaces (64) and (66). In another embodiment of the invention these front surfaces may be flat and vertical. Each of the lugs further has arcuate top surfaces (70) and (72) respectively and incurvate rear surfaces (74) and (76). The first (52) and second (54) lugs are opposed between gap (78). As the rollers of the in line skate are jammed into our in line skate guard, the walls of the skate guard flex outwards to receive the width of the rollers and then, once the rollers are inserted into the groove, the walls will compress or pinch against the sides of the rollers holding them immobile.

The Rear Portion

Referring now to Figure 5, there is shown in side view and rear sectional view the rear portion (48) of our in line skate guard. Line (80) serves to delineate the rear portion (48) from the mid portion (46). It is to be understood that the line (80) demarcation may vary in location depending on the mold manufacturer but will generally be found in the location shown.

Still referring to Figure 5, there is shown a rear sectional view of rear portion (48). The rear portion (48) has opposite and parallel third (82) and fourth (84) lugs projecting upwards. The lugs are adapted to mount fixing means to fix our invention to the in line skate as more fully explained below. The third (82) and fourth (84) rear portion lugs having inside surfaces (86) and (88) respectively and outside surfaces (90) and (92) respectively. The lugs have curved rear surfaces (94) and (96). In another embodiment of our invention, these surfaces may be flat vertical surfaces. Each of the lugs further has arcuate top surfaces (98)

and (100) respectively and incurvate front surfaces (102) and (104). The rear portion third (82) and fourth (84) lugs are opposed between a gap (105). Gap (105) is adapted in width to receive brake spur (36). The width of the rear portion (48) is slightly larger than the width of front portion (44) in order to accommodate wider gap (105). This is illustrated in Figure 8.

Referring to Figure 7, it can be seen that the curved contours of the lugs permit the wearer of the in line skate to jamb the rollers of the skate onto the stake guard from a variety of angles without having to resort to a toe-first insertion.

The Middle Portion

Now referring to Figure 6, there is shown the middle portion (46) of the elongate body of our invention in side view and in cross section. Demarcation line (50) separating the front portion (44) from the middle portion (46) is shown as is demarcation line (80) separating the middle portion (46) from the rear portion (48). In the cross section view, there are shown the following features, some of which are more fully explained below. The middle portion (46) includes horizontal bottom portion (128) walls (151) and (153) defining groove (150). There is also illustrated the unique beveling of the inside of the groove (150). The top width (171) is adapted to accommodate the width of the rollers of the in line skate and to create a compressive or pinching relationship between the inside surfaces of the walls (163) and (165) and the side walls of rollers. Deeper within the groove are found bevels (160) and (162) that create a thinner width (173) at the bottom surface (167) of the groove. The beveled portions within our in line skate guard are adapted to accommodate the circumferential arcuate taper of the rollers. When the skate is placed within the skate guard

the lower beveled portion of the groove will pinch against the sides of the circumferential arcuate taper of the rollers. As the roller wears with use and as the contact surface of the roller with the running surface becomes flatter, the bottom surface of the groove is able to better contact bottom of the roller so as to hold it in an immobile configuration. Advantageously, the wearer of our invention may run while wearing in line skates with our invention attached. As the wearer runs, the rollers are forced deeply within the groove and thereby immobilizing the rollers.

Still referring to Figure 6, the side view of the middle portion (46), line (41) represents the depth of the groove and line (47) represents the top of the beveled portion (162).

The Elongate Body

Now referring to Figure 7, there is shown in side view, the elongate body (42) of our invention comprising a front portion (44), a mid portion (46) and a rear portion (48). The elongate body has a horizontal top surface (120).

The Bottom Walking Surface

Still referring to Figure 7, there is shown one inventive feature of our invention, namely, the beveled bottom surface (122) extending from the front surfaces (64) and (66) to the vertical rear surfaces (94) and (96). The beveled bottom surface may further include various tread patterns to improve the purchase or traction of the beveled bottom surface on a walking surface. The bottom surface (122) has five integral contact planes in a serial and contiguous

relationship. From back to front, these planes are number (124), (126), (128), (132) and (134). These contact planes are adapted for contact with a walking surface (39) and have a profile adapted to accommodate the human walking gait cycle. Each plane is further adapted to permit the entirety of the bottom surface (122) to gain purchase or traction as the wearer walks. As previously discussed, the human walking gait cycle comprises the heel strike phase; then proceeding to a transition phase between the heel strike phase and the flat foot phase; the foot flat phase; then a transition phase between the flat foot phase and the heel off phase; the heel off phase; and, a toe off phase. The rear first contact plane (124) is adapted to contact the walking surface during the heel strike phase. The rear contact plane (124) is raised approximately 45 degrees from the horizontal. The second contact plane (126) is adapted to contact the walking surface during the transition between the heel strike phase and the foot flat phase. The second contact surface (126) is forward of the first contact surface and raised slightly above the horizontal. The second contact surface represents approximately 20% of the bottom surface (122) of the elongate body. The third contact surface (128) is horizontal and represents about 40% of the bottom surface of the elongate body. The third contact surface (128) is adapted to contact the walking surface and bear the wearer's weight in a stable manner during the foot flat phase of the walking gait cycle. The fourth contact surface (132) is ahead of the third contact surface (128) and is raised slightly from the horizontal. The fourth contact surface represents about 20% of the bottom surface and is adapted to contact the walking surface during the heel off phase of the human walking gait cycle. The fifth contact surface (134) is ahead of the fourth contact surface and is raised at an angle of approximately 45% from the horizontal. The fifth contact surface (134) is adapted to contact the walking surface during the toe off phase of the walking gait cycle. It is to be understood by a person skilled in the art of the invention that these diagrams and the

above description represent the preferred embodiment of our invention. Other embodiments of our invention may exist that have variations to the angles and lengths of contact surfaces described above. However, all embodiments of our invention are adapted to accommodate the natural human walking gait cycle.

Referring to Figure 7A, there is shown the front portion of the in line skate guard with an in line skate installed. Front roller (16) is shown inserted within the groove (150) and bight (152). The junction (129) between contact surface (134) having a purchase angle of 45 degrees and contact surface (132) is shown in alignment with the axis (24) of roller (16) and the toe (32) of the skate boot by line (15). This line creates an angle of 60 degrees. This angle is an optimum angle of the preferred embodiment of the invention and facilitates the use of a natural walking gate by the wearer. Similarly, Figure 7B illustrates a similar alignment between the heel (34) of the skate boot, the axle (30) of the rear roller (22) and the junction (139) between contact surface (126) and contact surface (124). This angle is also optimized to 60 degrees to facilitate the natural walking gate.

The Upper Surface of the Elongate Body

Another important feature of our invention which represents an improvement over the prior art is the manner in which our in line skate guard immobilizes the rollers of an in line skate within the elongate body (42) of our invention against movement and provides stability thereby permitting a natural walking and even running while wearing the in line skate guard of our invention.

Referring now to Figures 6, 7 and 8, there is shown our invention elongate body (42) in a side and top view respectively, with means within the body for accepting, immobilizing and securing the plurality of rollers of an in line roller skate. As shown in Figure 8, there is a channel-shaped groove (150) depending from the upper surface (120) of the body (42) into the body to a depth illustrated by line (41) adequate to retain the plurality of rollers in a stable and immobile configuration. As illustrated in the cross section in Figure 6, the channel shaped groove is defined by side walls (151) and (153). Each of the walls (151) and (153) includes an upper surface (155) and (157), inside surfaces (163) and (165) and outside surfaces (159) and (161). First width (171) and second width (173) of the channel-shaped groove (150) are also shown. Between the first and second widths there are bevel transition portions (160) and (162). The first width is wide enough to accept the entire width of the roller in a pinching engagement. It is understood that the material used to mold the elongate body has a certain amount of elastic flexibility that will allow the walls (151) and (153) to flex elastically outwardly when the roller blades are pushed into the groove (150). The beveled portion created by the second width is adapted to accept the circumferential taper of the roller also in a pinching engagement. The use of two widths and beveled portion in the groove permits the roller to embed further into the elongate body as the wearer walks or runs. Furthermore, as the rollers wear, the groove is able to adapt and continue to hold the worn roller in a pinching engagement. This provides provide greater stability to the wearer of our in line skate guard as the rollers wear down over time. As illustrated in Figure 3, when the skate rollers are placed into the skate guard, the bottom surface (11) of frame (14) of the skate will be in an abutting contact with the upper surfaces (155) and (157) of the skate guard walls (151) and (153).

Referring to Figure 7 and Figure 8, groove (150) commences at the front portion (44) at axis (65) and terminates at the rear portion (48) at a point that is slightly forward of axis (67). The groove (150) has a front curvilinear portion or bight (152) that curves front wards and upwards from the horizontal to accommodate the shape of the first roller of the in line skate. The groove also has a rear curvilinear portion or bight (154) that curves upwards and backwards to accommodate the shape of the rear roller of the in line skate.

Referring to Figure 9 there is shown in sectional view the front face of front portion (44) with first roller (16) held within the elongate body. The first roller wheel body is placed within the first width (171) and the circumferential arcuate taper of the roller wheel body is placed within the groove beveled portion. The lower contact surface of the roller is in contact with the bottom of the groove.

Referring to Figure 10, there is shown the back face of the back portion (48) in section view. The rear roller (22) of the in line skate is placed within the channel first width (171) in a pinching engagement to prevent rotation of the roller. The circumferential taper portion (41) of the last wheel body (22) is placed in a pinching relationship within the beveled portion of the groove. The bottom of the wheel is in contact with the bottom of the groove.

Fastening Our In Line Skate Guard to the In Line Skate

We will now describe the means to fasten our in line skate guard elongate body to the in line skate. Referring to Figure 11, there is shown the front face of the front portion (44) in sectional view. There is a first aperture (200) having an axis (65) located in the centre of the

front portion first lug (52). The first aperture penetrates from the outside surface (60) of the front portion first lug (52) to the inside surface (56) of the front portion first lug. The aperture has a countersunk portion (202) on the inside surface (56) of the front portion first lug. There is also a second aperture (204) located in the centre of the front portion second lug (54) co-axial with the first aperture (200). The second aperture (204) penetrates from the outside surface (62) of the front portion second lug to the inside surface (58) of the front portion second lug. The second aperture has a countersunk portion (206) on the inside surface. Also included as part of fixing means is a first semi-circular pivot hoop (210) having a length terminating in a first (212) and second loop (214). The first semi-circular pivot hoop is fixed by fixing means described in more detail below between the front portion first lug (52) and the front portion second lug (54).

Referring to Figure 12, there is shown a cross sectional view of the first portion emphasizing the second lug (54). Figure 12 illustrates the installing of second sleeve (220) in second aperture (204). Each of the first, second, third and fourth apertures described herein have sleeves installed in a similar fashion. The sleeve has the function of preventing excessive deformation to its respective aperture.

Second sleeve (220) is located within the front portion second lug (54) aperture (204). The second sleeve (220) has a first end (222) and a second end (224). The second sleeve second end (224) is adapted in shape to conform to the countersunk portion (206) of the front second lug aperture (204). Each of the sleeves is configured in such a manner that the outside edge of each of the second ends of the sleeves are recessed slightly from the inside surfaces of each of the lugs. In this way, the sleeve does not contact the side walls of the rollers and

abrade them. Each of the flange washer (side view at 203) is placed over end (222) of the sleeve to act as a friction bearing surface for loop (214). The flange washer is shown in face view at (205).

Referring to Figure 13, fixing means also includes a first tension chord (240) having a first end (242) and a second end (244). Fixed to the second end of the tension chord is a clip (246) and fixed to the first end of the tension chord is an eye ring (248). The eye ring (248) is engaged in a sliding relationship with the first pivot hoop (210).

Referring back to Figure 3 and to Figure 13, the semi-circular first pivot ring (210) has a radius sufficient to permit the apex (250) of the first semi-circular pivot ring to situate on top of the first roller (16). As well, the first tension chord (240) is sufficiently dimensioned to permit engagement of the first clip (246) to the second semi-circular pivot hoop (300).

Referring now to Figure 14, there is shown second fixing means comprising a third aperture (272) having an axis (67) in which is located a third sleeve (270). The third sleeve has a first end and a second end (276). The second end (276) is adapted in shape to conform to the countersunk portion of the rear lug third aperture (272). There is also a fourth sleeve located within the fourth lug fourth aperture co-axial with the third aperture (272). The fourth sleeve has a first end and a second end. The fourth sleeve second end has a countersunk portion conforming to the countersunk portion of the fourth aperture.

Referring back to Figure 12, the manner in which these sleeves are installed is illustrated. Also included as part of the second fixing means is a second semi-circular pivot hoop (300)

having a length terminating in a first (302) and second loop (304). The second semi-circular pivot hoop is fixed by fixing means between the front portion third lug (82) and said rear portion fourth lug (84).

Referring back to Figure 13, there is also included in second fixing means a second tension chord (290) having a first end (292) and a second end (294). Fixed to the first end of the second tension chord is a second clip (296) and fixed to the second end of the second tension chord is a second eye ring (298). The second eye ring (298) is engaged in a sliding relationship with the second pivot ring (300).

Referring back to Figure 3, the second pivot ring (300) has a radius sufficient to permit the apex (310) of the second pivot ring to situate on top of the fourth roller (22). As well, the second tension chord (290) is sufficiently dimensioned to permit engagement of the second clip (296) to the first semi circular pivot hoop (210).

Referring now to Figure 15, there is shown additional detail of the tension chord (240). Tension chord (240) and (290) are identical and therefore this figure serves to illustrate both. Chord (240) consists of an elastic member portion (400), a first end (242) and a second end (244). The first and second ends of the chord are covered with a plastic sleeve (404) and (406) respectively. These act to protect the ends of the chords from abrasion. The sleeves also act to anchor eye ring (248) and eye ring mount (249) to the tension chord first end (242) and clip mount (247) fixed to the tension chord second end (242). The tension chords are long enough and thick enough to permit engagement of the clips to their opposite hoops as illustrated in Figure 13. As well, the tension chords are sufficiently dimensioned to be

able to wrap around the body of an average in line skater so that the tension chords can be joined to hold our in line skate guards.

Referring now of Figure 16, there is shown details of the first (210) semi circular pivot hoop. The first hoop (210) and the second hoop (300) are identical and therefore this Figure will serve to illustrate both. The pivot hoop (210) is preferably made from piano wire and has two loops (212) and (214).

Referring now to Figure 17, there is shown detail on how the first (210) semi circular pivot hoop is fixed to the front (44) portion lugs (52) and (54). First hoop (210) is illustrated here and it is understood that the second hoop (300) is fastened in the same manner. The hoop (210) loop (214) is placed over the aperture (204) as shown. The aperture has a sleeve (206) inserted in it. The sleeve is countersunk to avoid abrasion against the outside surface of the in line skate roller. A shaft (502) is inserted into the sleeve. The shaft has a head configured to match the countersunk portion of the sleeve and a stepped down opposite end. The shaft is fixed in place inside the sleeve with glue. The opposite stepped down end of the shaft protrudes slightly from the outside surface of the lug. A countersunk washer (500) is placed over the stepped down end of the shaft flush with the outside surface of the lug. A washer side view is shown at (504). The washer acts as a bearing surface for loop (214). Loop (214) is placed over the shaft end. A second washer is placed over the stepped down end of the shaft after the loop. A button head rivet is then formed onto the second washer with the stepped down end of the shaft. In this way the loop is free to pivot around the shaft between the first and second washers. The pivot hoop will have constant freedom and will not loosen or tighten and the rivet will not fall off.

As understood by a person skilled in the art, all of the hardware associated with our invention, such as the rivets, sleeves and pivot rings, is made from suitable strong, durable and rust-resistant metals such as stainless steel, brass or chrome metal.

Although this description contains much specificity, these should not be construed as limiting the scope of the invention by merely providing illustrations of some of the embodiment of the invention. Thus the scope of the invention should be determined by the appended claims and their legal equivalents rather than by the examples given.